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4 April 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: NVN Civilian Casualty Figures and Methodology

1. This is an addendum to the 4 April ORR memo on casualties in North Vietnam. The other memo was written so that it could be passed to Senator Symington, if you cannot avoid giving him a piece of paper. This memo is for your background information only.

2. The casualty estimates in the ORR memorandum are a combination of independently derived CIA estimates, and DIA estimates refined by CIA analysts. The estimates of the civilian and military casualties resulting from attacks on fixed targets and the military casualties resulting from aerial reconnaissance are DIA estimates weighted by CIA to reflect data obtained from [redacted] prisoner of war interrogations and other intelligence sources. The estimates of civilian casualties attributable to armed reconnaissance are strictly CIA estimates, since DIA makes no attempt to estimate these casualties.

3. The major differences between CIA and DIA estimates are as follows:

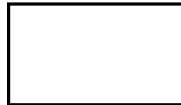
a) DIA estimates of casualties resulting from attacks on fixed targets are expressed in a broad range of minimum and maximum casualties.* The maximum figures assume that the population in the target area was unwarned; the minimum figures assume warning and full resort to civil defense and protective measures. We have found fairly consistently that the initial attacks on JCS fixed targets have inflicted casualties that are four times greater than the minimum DIA estimates. Consequently, we have weighted the DIA estimates by a factor

* The maximum figure would generally be 10 times greater than the minimum; e. g. 100 - 1,000.

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of four for all initial strikes on JCS fixed targets and accepted the DIA estimates for all targets undergoing restrikes. Thus if a DIA casualty estimate for an initial strike is presented as ranging from 12-120, we would weight the minimum figure by four and estimate casualties as 48.

b) The estimates of military casualties resulting from armed reconnaissance are probably the most unreliable of all our casualty estimates. We have accepted DIA factors for estimating these casualties with the exception of specific categories -- trucks and watercraft -- for which the DIA weights were reduced to reflect information gained from POW reports and COMINT.

c) Civilian casualties resulting from armed reconnaissance are estimated only by CIA. We develop our estimates on an all-source basis. DIA works exclusively from photography and pilot reports, and does not attempt to estimate civilian casualties resulting from armed reconnaissance. Since these casualties account for the bulk of casualties, the CIA estimates of total casualties are significantly higher than those of DIA.

George A. Carver, Jr.
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

O/DCI/SAVA:GACarver:PWalsh/mce

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Copies 6, 7, 8 and 9 - SAVA

*dci Spec. Proj.
Reference Book
GAC Chrono
VA S Chrono
Long Season*

1 - Mr. Warner, Legis. Counsel

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Mr. John Warner

GACarver

Symington Papers

These are the papers we gave the
Director so he could respond to
Symington's query.

George A. Carver, Jr.
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

Attachments
ORR 4 Apr memo
SAVA 4 Apr memo